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ABSTRACT

Developed as a teaching aid for a General Educational Development (GED) preparation class, this essay writing guide gives students the tools they need to develop and organize ideas for writing an essay with confidence. By following a sequential procedure in this very structured approach, students learn to turn out a well-organized essay. The material begins with an introduction to the teacher that provides the purpose, format of the completed essay, and content of the package. Instructions are provided for using the package that includes material for the development of five essays. The essay topics are to introduced to the students and sample essays are to be developed step by step from conception to finished product. Attachments include the presentation material, which comes in the form of a series of 8 1/2" by 11" frames. The basic presentation consists of 23 numbered frames. There are two types of frames. Frames 1, 2, 3, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 16, 19, 21, 22, and 23 are skeleton frames that are to be used with all the essays. The others are specific to the five sample essays and can be identified by the letter suffix on each frame number. (YLB)

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ED 394 016

Essay Development and Organization for the GED Examination

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August 16, 1993

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I. Introduction

A. Purpose

I developed this essay writing presentation material as a teaching aid for my GED preparation classes at the Worcester Community Action Council. The purpose of this material is to give students the tools they need to develop and organize ideas for writing an essay with confidence. The approach is very structured. By following a sequential procedure, the students turn out a well-organized essay. This package does not include aids in developing writing style, sentence development or grammar. These skills can be taught previous to or at the same time as essay development and organization.

B. Format of Essay

The final product is a two to three hundred word essay consisting of four paragraphs, an introduction, a body with two paragraphs, and a conclusion. The introduction contains a thesis statement or point of view and two statements or arguments, which support the point of view. The arguments are expanded upon in the body. In the conclusion the writer brings the reader back to the thesis and make closing remarks.

C. Content of Package

The presentation comes in the form of a series of frames 8½" by 11". It is effective to put the frames in top loading sheet protectors (three holes). A box of 110 sheet protectors is available from a local discount store for less than $10.00. The sheets can be used in a three-ring binder as a flip chart suitable for a presentation to either a small class or an individual. If an overhead projector is available, transparencies can easily be made from the frames.

The package includes material for the development of five essays. The essay topics are introduced to the students and sample essays are developed step by step from conception to finished product. The basic presentation consists of twenty-three numbered frames.

There are two types of frames. Frames 1, 2, 3, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 16, 19 ,21 ,22, and 23 are skeleton frames. They are used with all the essays. The others are specific to the five sample essays and can be identified by the letter suffix to each frame number. For example frame 4a introduces the helmet topic and 4c introduces the bottle topic. Frame 8a shows how ideas for the helmet topic can be organized and frame 8c does the same for the bottle essay. (See table.)

Developed essays

a	Should bicycle riders be required to wear safety helmets?
b	Why did I decide to earn my GED?
c	Should the bottle law be rescinded?
d	Is playing video games bad or good?
e	Should people give money to beggars?

Handouts

a	Point of view, classification, and brainstorming form
b	Cluster diagram form

Frames.

FRAME	SKELETON	ESSAY SPECIFIC
1.	Title	
2.	How to organize your time	
3.	Preparation title	
4.		Topic statement
5.		Find important words
6.		Point of view statement
7.		Brainstorming
8.		Classification
9.	Draw a cluster diagram	
10.	Outline cluster diagram	
11.		Essay specific cluster
12.	Writing title	
13.	Sections of an essay	
14.	Writing introduction	
15.		Sample introduction
16.	Writing body	
17.		Sample first body paragraph
18.		Sample second body paragraph
19.	How to write conclusion	
20.		Sample conclusion
21.	Revising title	
22.	Revising directions	
23.	Editing directions	

II. Presentation

The following steps are suggestions of how the material can be presented. As the students gain experience, a greater amount of independence should be encouraged. Forms (handouts A and B) have been developed to aid the writer as he learns the process. When the writers gain experience, blank sheets of paper should be used for brainstorming and for drawing cluster diagrams.

A. Preparation

Display frame 1. Explain that the purpose of this presentation is to learn a step by step procedure for developing and organizing ideas for an essay.

Display frame 2: Although it is important to explain the importance of learning how to organize the time allowed to complete the essay, the important lesson to be learned from this frame is that the

planning stage of essay writing requires as much time as the actual writing and that it is important to allow a little time to look the essay over before turning it in. Many students want to begin writing before planning and organizing. Don't be concerned about time constraints initially. I find that inexperienced writers take about two hours to complete the process the first few times they try.

1. **Reading and Understanding.**

Display frame 3: Remind the students that they are going to learn how to plan and organize an essay before they begin the actual writing.

Display frame 4: The first step is to read the topic statement. After reading, ask the students to identify the important words or phrases in the topic as an aid to its understanding. After this is done, discuss the words with the students. Let the students compare the words they chose with the words highlighted in **frame 5**. Since choosing important words is somewhat subjective, the words do not necessarily have to be the same.

2. **Point of View.**

The next step is to develop a point-of-view sentence or the thesis. Emphasize that a complete sentence should be written. The point of view is used to focus the writers' thoughts on the theme of the essay. It is OK for students to give each other ideas when they are learning the process.

After each student has expressed his point of view orally, pass out handout A and have each student write his or her point of view on the designated line. When that is done, compare their point of views with each other. Then compare the students' points of views with the point of view found on **frame 6**. Explain that there is no correct answer and that there can be as many different points of view as students. Note in the cases when students have trouble expressing or coming up with a point of view, it is acceptable to do the brainstorming step first. Having a list of words sometimes makes it easier to develop an opinion. It is also acceptable to change the point of view after the brainstorming session, but not after beginning the actual writing.

3. **Generating Ideas or Brainstorming.**

The next step is to generate ideas. This is done by brainstorming. It is helpful and fun for the class to brainstorm together for the first few times and write the words on the board. Also there is a section on handout A for students to write brainstorm words.

After the brainstorming is complete, compare the class list with the examples found on **frame 7**. It is OK for the students to add some of the words on **frame 7** to their lists.

4. **Classifying Ideas.**

Look at the words and try to separate the words into two idea groups. Give each group a name. After naming the groups, place each word in a group by placing a one after the first-group word and a two after the second-word group. Compare the results with those displayed on **frame 8**. Be sure to explain that the groups used in **frame 8** are only examples. There are many possibilities. The teacher has the responsibility, however, to make sure that the student classifications are both logical and workable. (Although more than two groups can be formed, each extra group translates into an extra paragraph. Because of time and essay size constraints, I recommend limiting it to two word groups if possible.

5. Cluster Diagram.

The cluster diagram is a tool that graphically represents the structure of an essay. It is used in place of an outline. The cluster is more graphic and enables students to see the relationship of ideas more clearly. **Frame 9** is a display of a set of directions for drawing a cluster diagram. The more experienced student should draw a diagram on a blank sheet of paper.

The beginning writer should use handout B, which is displayed on **frame 10**. This is a blank outline of a cluster drawing. This is a guide; the student does not have to fill in all the circles and can add more circles if needed. It has been my experience that using this tool for the first two or three essays helps the student is better able to construct his own diagram later without needing the outline drawing as a crutch. When the class is finished, compare results with the completed cluster on **frame 11**.

B. Writing

Turn to **frame 12**. Announce to the class that they are beginning the second part of the process — writing.

1. Parts of an Essay.

Frame 13 shows the three parts of an essay in graphic form. Be sure the writer understands this structure before beginning to write. Although the chart says that a body can have more than two paragraphs, a two-body paragraph is recommended for the GED writing sample. A two-paragraph body is easier to control in the limited time allowed to complete the test. Also ask the students to have their completed cluster diagrams and point of view statements at their tables. Emphasize that a student does not have to use all the data included in the cluster and can add additional data as he or she writes. What the writer should not do is

to change the basic structure of the essay, what type of information that will go into each of the four paragraphs.

2. Writing Introduction.

Frame 14 explains what should be included in the introduction. Before continuing, be sure that each student understands this material. After the class writes their introductions, the teacher should review each introduction.

If a student has a problem beginning his essay, it is acceptable for him or her to use the point of view sentence as the first sentence in the introduction. A more experienced writer may begin in a different way.

When everyone is satisfied that the introduction follows the guidelines on **frame 14**, turn to **frame 15** to compare them with the introduction to the sample essay.

3. Writing the Body Paragraphs.

Turn to frame 16. Follow the guidelines while writing the two body paragraphs. I suggest that the teacher critique each student paragraph immediately after it is written before allowing him or her to start the next paragraph. Compare the body paragraphs with the samples shown on **frame 17** and **frame 18**. Use the cluster diagram to write the body paragraphs. Beginning writers will find it easier to make the first sentence in each paragraph the topic sentence.

4. Writing the Concluding Paragraph.

The concluding paragraph can be the most difficult. **Frame 19** lists some ideas that may be included in a final paragraph. The results can be compared with the sample on **frame 20**.

C. Revising

Turn to **frame 20**. Tell the students that there is still more to do in the writing process. They still have to revise and edit their work to ensure themselves that the essay is correctly written and logically organized. Steps for revising and editing can be found on **frame 22** and **frame 23** of the flip chart.

III. Conclusion

I hope that this material will be of use to teachers and students in Massachusetts GED preparation classes. Please send comments and suggestions to me at the following address:

Alan Tubman
Worcester Community Action Council
340 Main Street, Room 370
Worcester, MA 01608-1690

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IV. Selected Bibliography

Dawe, Charles W. and Edward A. Dornan. *One to One: Resources for Conference-Centered Writing*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1987. College level textbook that covers organization and style.

Hoyt, Cathy Fillmore. *New Revised Cambridge GED Program: Writing Skills*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Regents/Prentice Hall, 1993. Structured approach, includes student checklists and alternate diagramming methods for essay organization.

Johnson, Cheryl Moore. *GED Exercise Book: Writing Sample*. Austin: Steck-Vaughn Company, 1992. Structured approach in workbook format.

Troyka, Lynn Quitman. *Simon & Schuster Handbook for Writers*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1987. Reference book on all aspects of writing and grammar. Includes sections on planning and clustering.

Wickman, Susan Breemer. *GED: Writing Skills*. Chicago: Contemporary Books, Inc., 1987. Includes many ideas on organizing essays. Uses outline approach for essay organization.

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Point of View Statement (Complete Sentence)

_____

_____

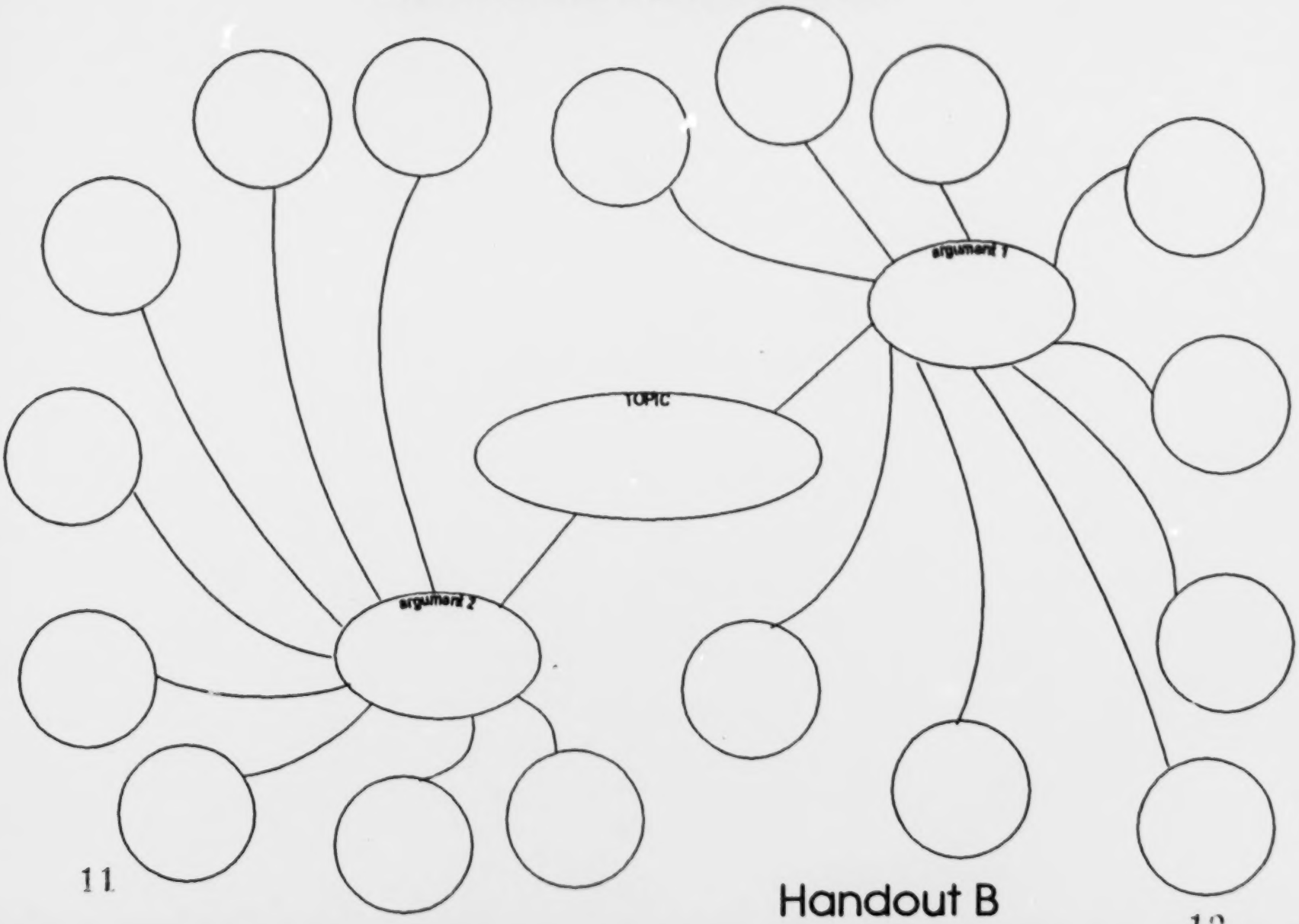
_____

Brainstorming and Classification

Group 1 _____ Group 2 _____

Handout A

CLUSTER DIAGRAM

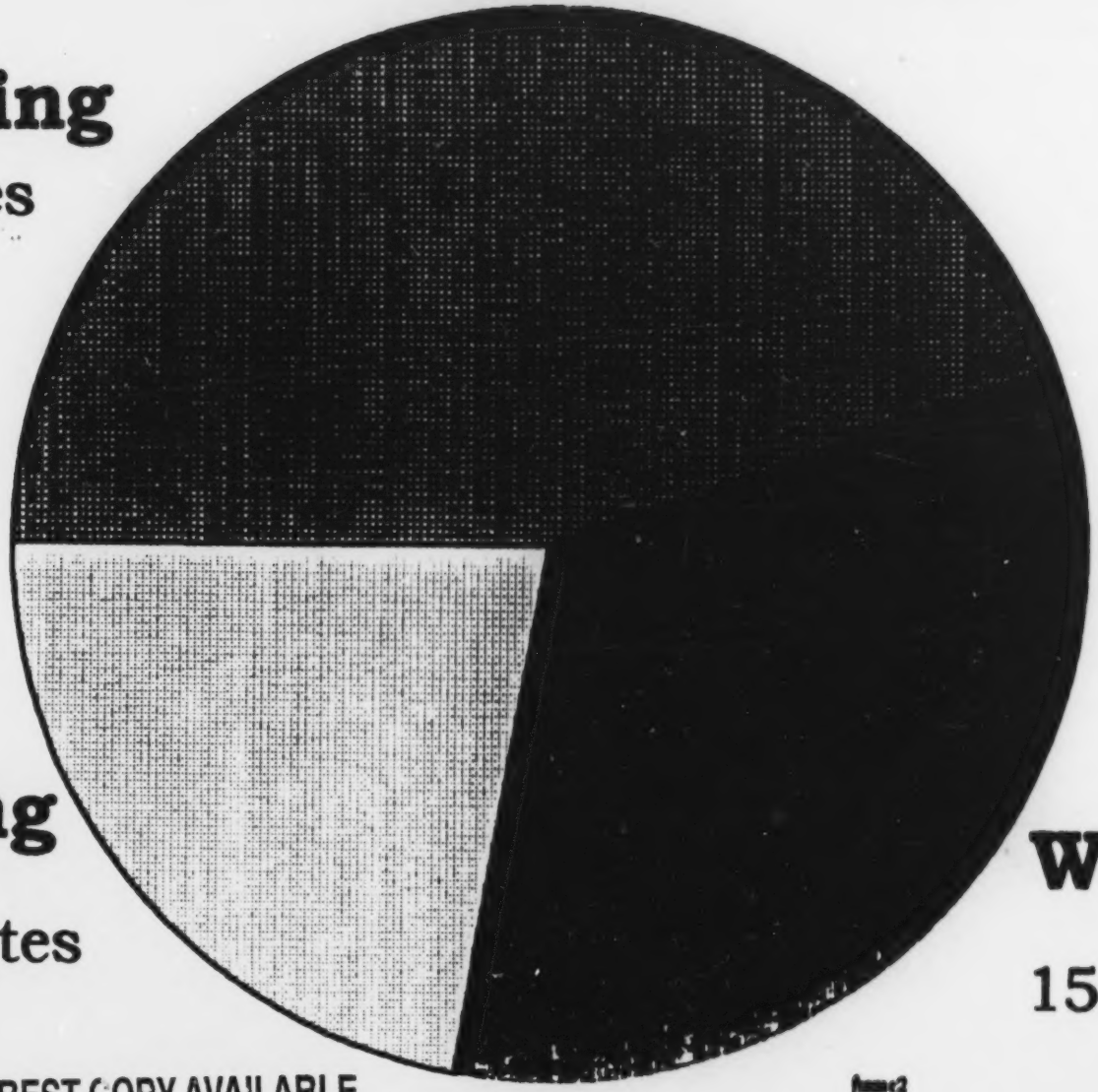


Handout B

Writing Essays for the GED

How to Organize Your Time

Preparing
20 minutes



Revising
10 minutes

Writing
15 minutes

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PREPARATION

READ THE TOPIC

In the interest of safety, the governments of several states passed laws requiring motorcyclists to wear crash helmets. Many parents and educators believe that children who ride bicycles should also wear helmets to protect themselves from severe head injuries.

What do you believe should be done to protect our future citizens. Should parents require their children to wear helmets? Should state legislatures enact laws making the wearing of safety helmets mandatory for bicycle riders? Should parents leave it up to the children to decide if they want to wear helmets?

Write an essay of about 200 words stating your point of view. Support your reasons with specific examples.

frame 4a

UNDERSTAND THE TOPIC

Marking all the key words in the topic helps.

In the interest of **safety**, the governments of several states passed laws requiring motorcyclists to wear **crash helmets**. Many parents and educators believe that children who ride **bicycles** should also wear helmets to protect themselves from severe head injuries.

What do you believe should be **done to protect** our future citizens? Should parents require their children to wear helmets? Should state legislatures enact laws making the wearing of safety helmets mandatory for bicycle riders? Should parents leave it up to the children to decide if they want to wear helmets?

Write an essay of about 200 words stating your point of view. Support your reasons with specific examples.

frame 5a

WRITE YOUR POINT OF VIEW IN ONE SENTENCE.

Members of the community should work together to teach youngsters the importance of wearing safety helmets while riding bicycles.

frame 6a

BRAINSTORM TO GENERATE IDEAS

safety-helmets		emergency rooms		open door	
precautions		children		hitting child	
movies		safety habits		contests	
hospitals		safety classes		paralysis	
books		schools		motivation	
ambulances		mandatory		accidents	
against will		carelessness		community	
want to wear		death		brain damage	
television					

frame 7a

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Classify the Brainstorming Ideas

The brainstorming list has been divided into two groups: (1) Consequences (2) Motivations

safety-helmets	2,1	emergency rooms	1	open door	1
precautions	1	children	2,1	hitting child	1
movies	2	safety habits	2	contests	2
hospitals	1	safety classes	2	paralysis	1
books	2	schools	2	motivation	2
ambulances	1	mandatory	2	accidents	1
against will	2	carelessness	1	community	2
want to wear	2	death	1	brain damage	1
television	2				

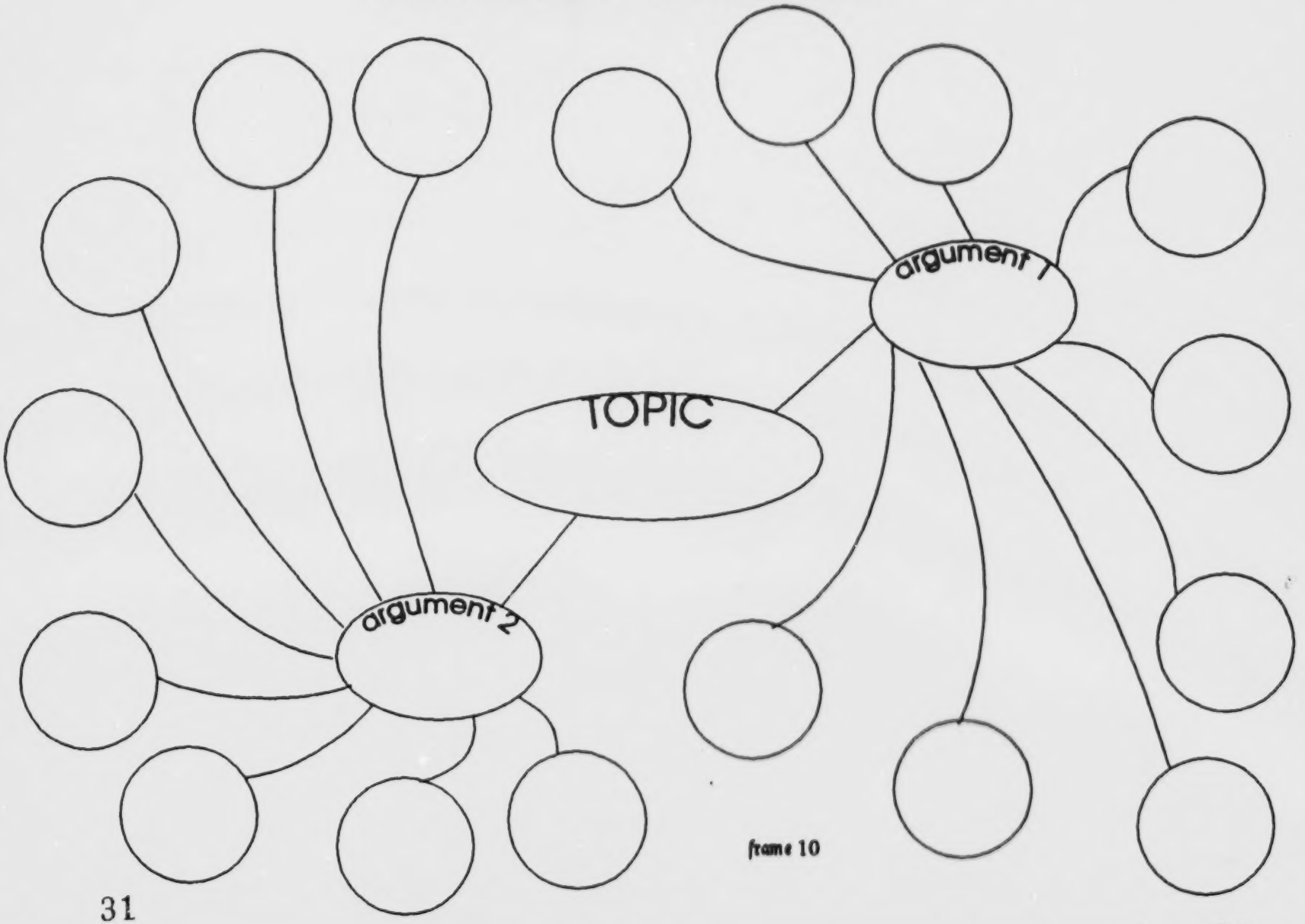
frame 8a

DRAW A CLUSTER DIAGRAM

- Write theme of essay in center of a sheet of paper.
- Draw a circle around it.
- Write two main reasons or arguments for point of view.
- Draw circles around them.
- Connect argument circles to theme circle with lines.
- Write supporting data or examples around arguments.
- Draw circles and connect to arguments.

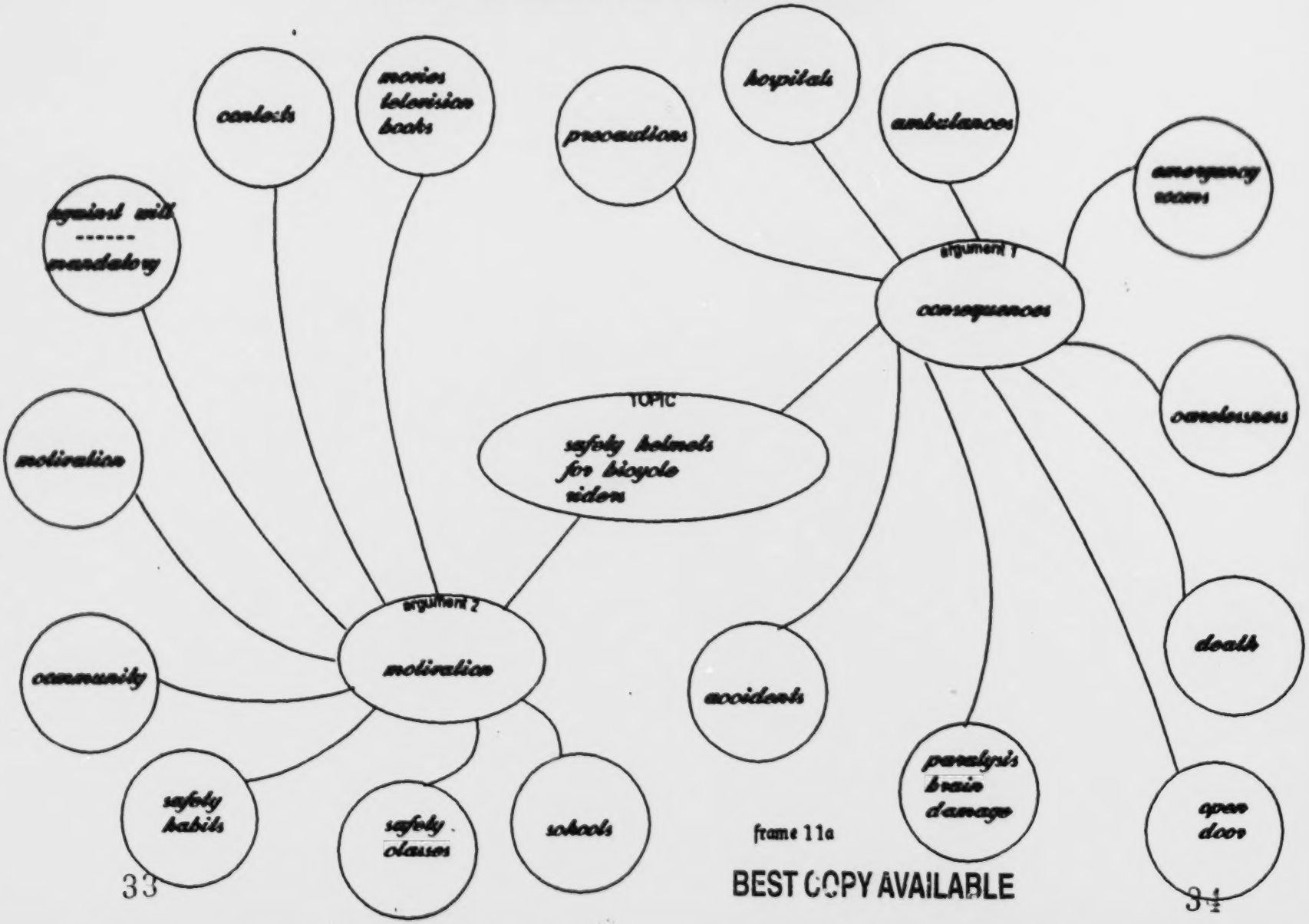
frame 9

CLUSTER DIAGRAM



frame 10

CLUSTER DIAGRAM



frame 11a

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WRITING

Essays are Divided into Three Sections

Introduction

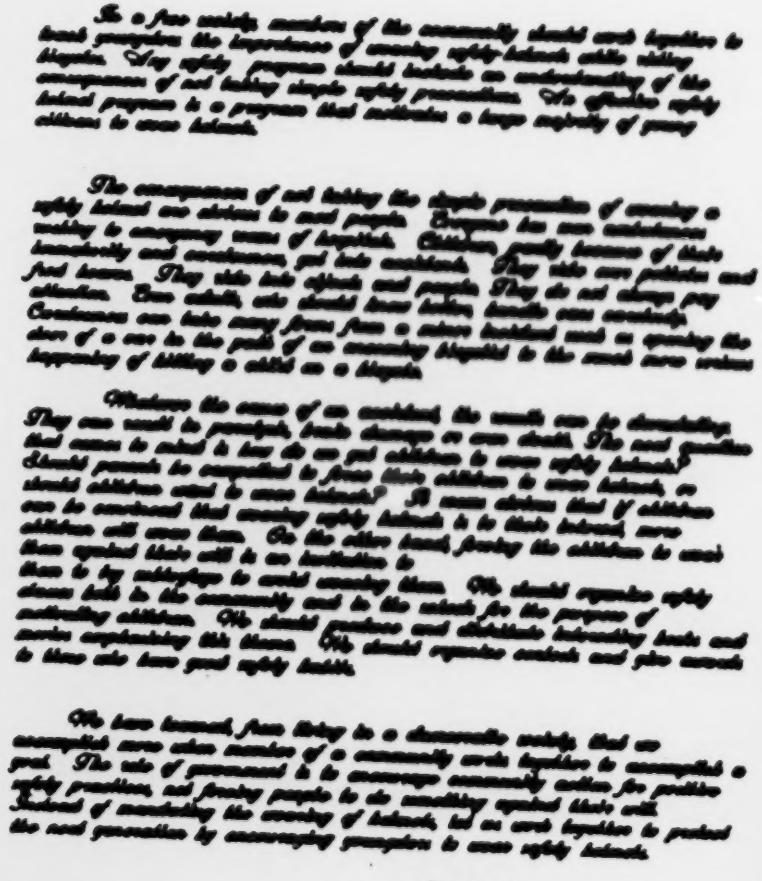
One paragraph

Body

Two or more paragraphs

Conclusion

One paragraph



frame 13

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INTRODUCTION

The first paragraph introduces your theme to the reader.

- **Clearly state your point of view about the topic. The beginner should usually state the point of view in the first sentence. Warning: Do not assume that the reader has read the test question. State your point of view fully and clearly.**

- **Introduce the reasons or arguments for the point of view (from your cluster diagram). Do not support your reasons with many details. This is done later in the body.**

- **Arouse the interest of the reader. This can sometimes be done in the form of a question or a sentence with added information which will be of interest.**

WRITE THE INTRODUCTION

Start with your point of view or purpose.

Introduce the first argument — consequences.

Introduce the second argument — motivation.

In a free society, members of the community should work together to teach youngsters the importance of wearing safety-helmets while riding bicycles. Any safety program should include an understanding of the consequences of not taking simple safety precautions. An effective safety helmet program is a program that motivates a large majority of young citizens to wear helmets.

frame 15a

BODY

The body consists of two or more paragraphs which expand on the arguments or supporting ideas developed in the first paragraph.

- **Use the cluster diagram to find the main arguments supporting your point of view.**

- **Write a paragraph for each of the arguments, using the cluster diagram to find supporting details. (Not all the details in the cluster diagram have to be used. Other appropriate information may be added to support the argument.)**

- **Each paragraph should have a topic sentence.**

frame 16

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WRITE THE FIRST BODY PARAGRAPH

Start with a topic sentence. This paragraph supports the first argument — consequences. Both the causes of the consequences and the consequences are described. Dramatic concluding sentence of paragraph.

The consequences of not taking the simple precaution of wearing a safety helmet are obvious to most people. Everyone has seen ambulances rushing to hospital emergency rooms. Children, partly because of their immaturity and carelessness, get into accidents. They ride over potholes and frost heaves. They ride into objects and people. They do not always pay attention. Even adults, who should know better, handle cars carelessly. Carelessness can take many forms from a minor incident such as opening the door of a car in the path of an oncoming bicyclist to the much more serious happening of hitting a child on a bicycle. Whatever the cause of an accident, the results can be devastating. They can result in paralysis, brain damage or even death.

frame 17a

WRITE THE SECOND BODY PARAGRAPH

Start with a topic sentence. This paragraph supports the second argument — motivation. Reasons for trying to motivate the children.

Motivational tools.

The next question that comes to mind is how do we get children to wear safety helmets? Should parents be compelled to force their children to wear helmets, or should children want to wear helmets? It seems obvious that if children can be convinced that wearing safety helmets is to their interest, more children will wear them. On the other hand, forcing children to wear them against their will is an invitation to them to try subterfuge to avoid wearing them. We should organize safety classes both in the community and in the schools for the purpose of motivating children. We should produce and distribute interesting books and movies emphasizing this theme. We should organize contests and give awards to those who have good safety habits.

frame 18a

CONCLUSION

The conclusion is the final paragraph. It pulls everything together. It reminds the reader what he has read. Do not introduce new topics. Here are some suggestions of what can be included in the last paragraph.

- **Restate the main idea. Try not to be redundant.**
- **Give some final advice, propose a solution to the problem, or suggest a course of action.**
- **Emphasize a key point or two.**
- **State an opinion.**
- **Show how issue relates to your or your readers' lives.**
- **Write anything else you can think of to make your essay strong.**

WRITE THE CONCLUSION

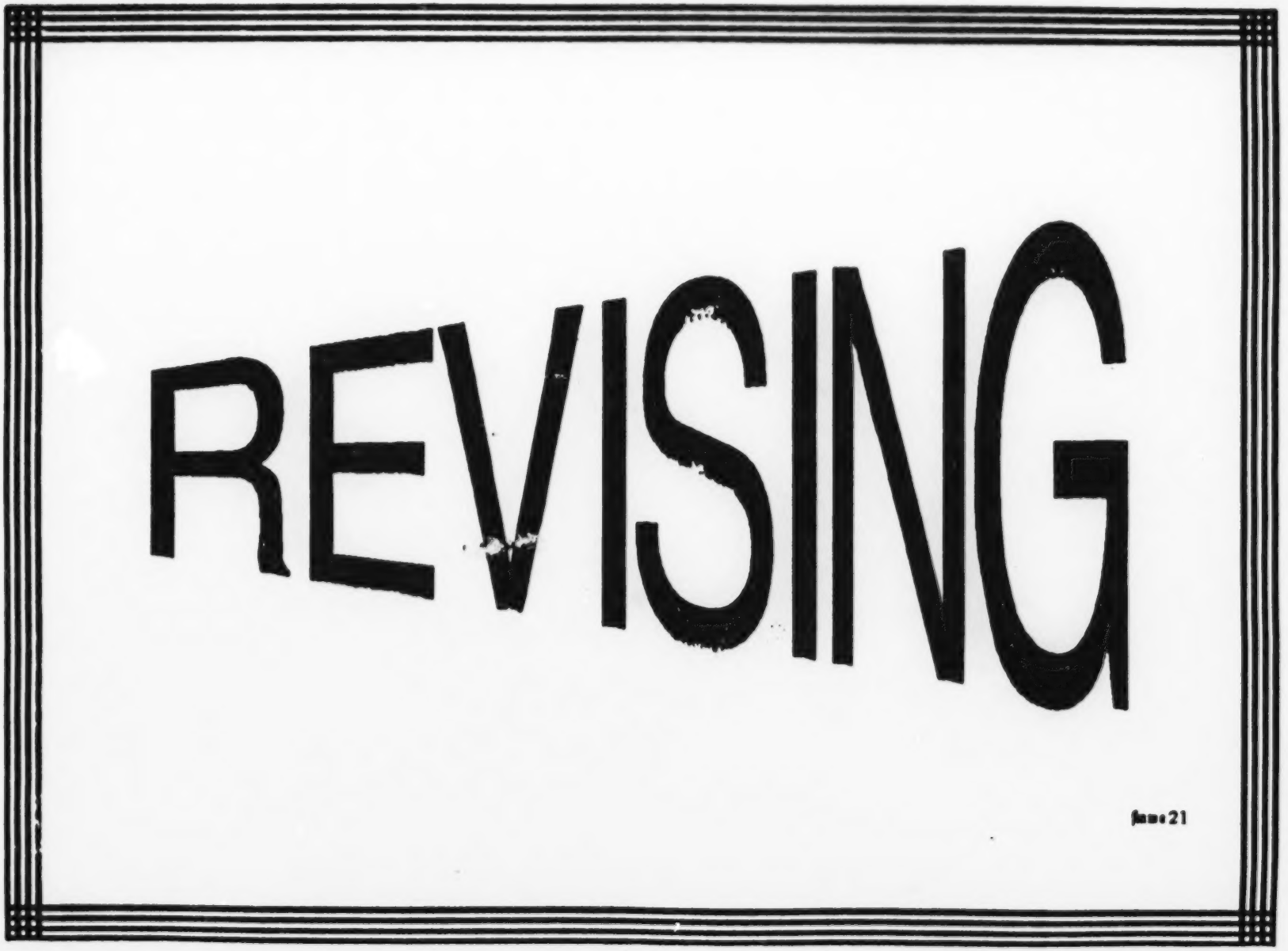
Start with a restatement of the point of view introduced in the first paragraph.

Emphasize point that you consider important.

Conclude with a call for action.

We have learned, from living in a democratic society, that we accomplish more when members of a community work together to accomplish a goal. The role of government is to encourage community action for positive safety practices, not forcing people to do something against their will. Instead of mandating the wearing of helmets, let us work together to protect the next generation by encouraging youngsters to wear safety helmets.

frame 20


REVISING

REVISE THE ESSAY

Check the essay for errors in logic.

- **Will a reader have a clear idea of the subject and purpose of the essay from the point of view statement in the first paragraph?**
- **Are the main arguments that support your point of view clearly stated in the first paragraph and adequately explained in the body paragraphs? Are your supporting data convincing?**
- **Remove sentences that do not relate to your point of view.**
- **Does each paragraph have a topic sentence?**
- **Does the last paragraph emphasize your main points and remind the reader of what he has read?**

Item 22

EDIT THE ESSAY

Check the essay for errors in language and structure.

- **Check for correct paragraph indentation.**
- **Check for correct spelling, punctuation, and capital letters.**
- **Check for consistent verb tenses, agreement of subjects and verbs, clear pronoun antecedents, and other grammatical forms.**
- **Check for unnecessary shifts in person. For example don't shift from *they* to *you*.**

frame 23

READ THE TOPIC

You and every student in your GED class chose to prepare for his or her GED diploma. Because of your decision, you are spending many hours in class and study. Write an essay explaining your personal reasons for deciding to work for your GED. Include specific reasons for your decision.

frame 4b

UNDERSTAND THE TOPIC

Find important words

You and every student in your GED class **chose** to **prepare** for his or her **GED** diploma. Because of your decision, you are spending many hours in class and study. Write an essay explaining your **personal reasons** for deciding to **work** for your GED. Include specific reasons for your decision.

frame 5b

WRITE YOUR POINT OF VIEW IN ONE SENTENCE.

I want to earn my GED in order to have respect and a happy life.

frame 6b

BRAINSTORM TO GENERATE IDEAS

bored		happiness		crime	
tired		counselor		fun	
more money		college		bonuses	
feel dumb		jobs		family	
jail		technical school		respect	
court		no job		unemployment	
mother		rejection		father	

frame 7b

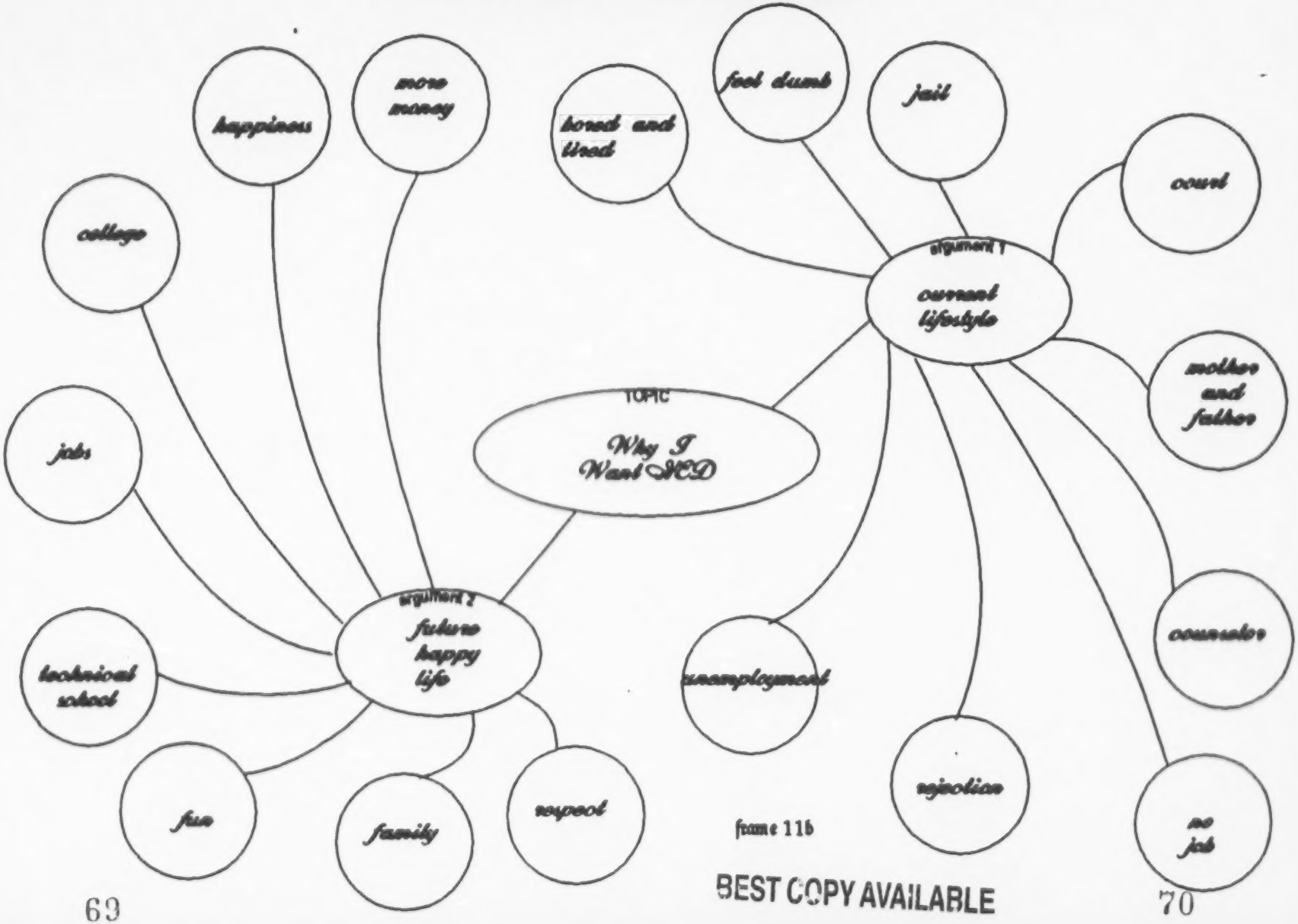
Classify the Brainstorming Ideas

The brainstorming list has been divided into two groups: (1) Current Lifestyle (2) Future Happy Life

bored	1	happiness	2	crime	1
tired	1	counselor	1	fun	2
more money	2	college	2	bonuses	
feel dumb	1	jobs	2	family	2
jail	1	technical school	2	respect	2
court	1	no job	1	unemployment	1
mother	1	rejection	1	father	1

frame 86

CLUSTER DIAGRAM



frame 11b

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WRITE THE INTRODUCTION

Start with your point of view.

Introduce the first argument
Unhappy with life.

Introduce the second argument
What will happen to me if I get my GED.

I decided to prepare for my GED equivalency diploma to make my life better. I was bored and tired with my life as I was living it. I felt that I would feel better about myself if I prepared myself for a good productive life.

frame 158

WRITE THE FIRST BODY PARAGRAPH

Topic expressed in first sentences. Dissatisfaction with life.

Specific examples in next few sentences.

Transition to next paragraph.

For the past few years, I had not been doing anything worthwhile. I spent most of my days sleeping and nights hanging out with my friends. Last year I got into trouble with the courts, but nothing much happened to me. Some of my friends got into serious trouble and are doing time. I tried to get a good job, but most employers wanted high school graduates. In fact, everyone I knew started to tell me to get my GED – my parents, my old school guidance counselor, and even my new girlfriend.

frame 17b

WRITE THE SECOND BODY PARAGRAPH

Start with a topic sentence. This paragraph supports the second supporting idea:
What my future life could be like with a GED.
Following sentences include specific examples of what life would be like.

All of this pressure made me think about my situation and about what I could do with my life if I wanted to. With a GED diploma, I would be able to further my education and training either at a college or at a technical school. This would lead to a good job with a good salary. I would be able to marry my girlfriend and support a family. I would have respect for myself and be respected by others.

frame 186

WRITE THE CONCLUSION

Restatement of point of view included in this paragraph.

Although I am still attending a GED class, I can see that I made the right decision. I have more respect for myself and other people have more respect for me. The new path that I am following will lead toward all the good things in life.

Concludes with hope for the future.

frame 20b

READ THE TOPIC

We have been paying a deposit on every soda bottle bought in Massachusetts for several years. Do you believe that the law is a good one or do you believe that the law should be repealed? Clearly state your point of view in an essay of about 200 words. Include specific information to support your opinion.

frame 4c

UNDERSTAND THE TOPIC

We have been paying a **deposit** on every soda **bottle** bought in Massachusetts for several years. Do you believe that the **law** is a good one or do you believe that the law should be **repealed**? Clearly state your point of view in an essay of about 200 words. Include specific information to support your opinion.

frame 5c

WRITE YOUR POINT OF VIEW IN ONE SENTENCE.

The bottle law in Massachusetts is very effective and should not be repealed.

---

frame 6c

BRAINSTORM TO GENERATE IDEAS

junk		fewer injuries & cuts		clean streets	
bottles		responsibility		pocket money/ candy	
broken glass		flat tires		redeem	
clean up		kids hurt		economy	
jobs for kids		looks terrible		pollution	
clean highways		poor starve		poor people	
pay for cleaning		tourists		clean parks	
safer environment		jobs/ recycle center		good habits.	
cheaper garbage collection					

frame 7c

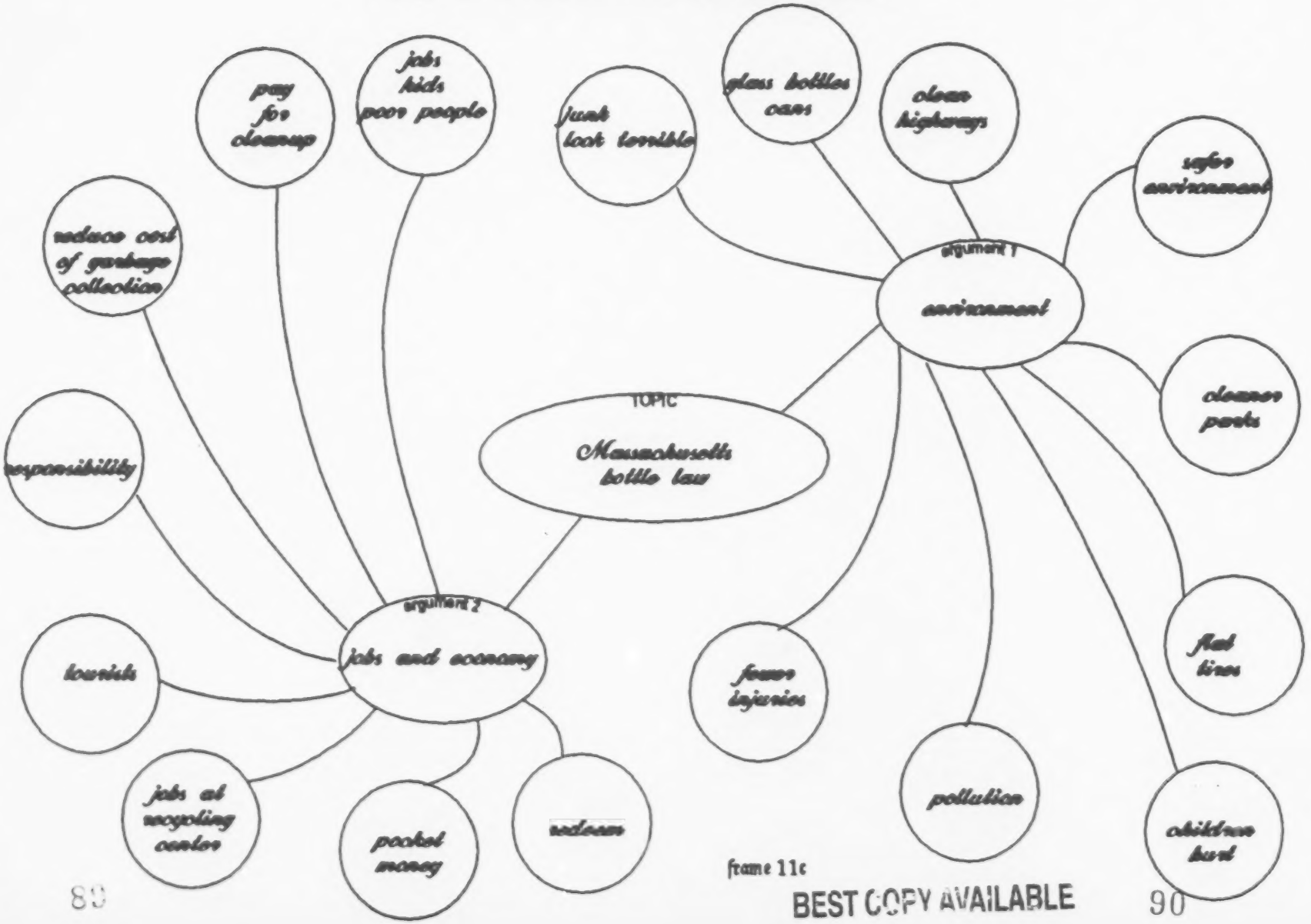
Classify the Brainstorming Ideas

The brainstorming list has been divided into two groups: (1) Environment (2) Jobs/economy

junk	1	fewer injuries & cuts	1	clean streets	1
bottles	1	responsibility	2	pocket money/ candy	2
broken glass	1	flat tires	1	redeem	2
clean up	1	kids hurt	1	economy	2
jobs for kids	2	looks terrible	1	pollution	1
clean highways	1	poor starve	2	poor people	2
pay for cleaning	2	tourists	182	clean parks	1
safer environment	1	jobs/ recycle center	2	good habits.	2
cheaper garbage collection	2				

frame 8c

CLUSTER DIAGRAM



frame 11c

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

WRITE THE INTRODUCTION

Start with your point of view or purpose.
Introduce the first argument — environment
Introduce the second argument — economy.

Clarification of arguments.

The bottle deposit law in Massachusetts is both a very effective tool for combating pollution in our environment and is an impetus for stimulating a declining or stagnant economy. People who used to dispose of their cans or bottles in an inappropriate way, now take the trouble to return them to the stores. Other people now pick up all the cans they can find in the streets and take them to redemption centers.

frame 15c

WRITE THE FIRST BODY PARAGRAPH

Topic expressed in first sentence.
Environment a mess without bottle law.
What the state was like without the bottle law.
Second sentence states the situation is different today.
Each sentence that follows presents a supporting fact that supports the topic sentence.

Before the bottle law came into effect, most of our streets, highways and open land were littered with broken bottles and rusty cans. All of this has changed. We no longer see a myriad of bottles and cans. Children can now play in the parks and in the countryside without danger of being injured by rusty cans and broken glass. Automobile drivers can now travel down our highways and byways with less danger of damaging tires on this type of litter. We no longer have to feel ashamed when visitors from other states and lands come to see our national monuments, historical sites and beautiful scenery.

frame 17c

WRITE THE SECOND BODY PARAGRAPH

Start with a topic sentence. This paragraph supports the second argument — economy

Each sentence that follows presents a supporting fact that supports the topic sentence. Ends with an important point.

The benefits of the bottle bill for our economy and people is overwhelming. The wealth that tourists bring to a clean state provides employment for its citizens. The cost of collecting rubbish has been contained. The expense of hauling bottles and cans to dumps has been eliminated. People who are unemployed now have a chance to earn a little income by gathering cans and bottles. Children have a chance to earn a little pocket money. Finally, the enforcement of the bottle law requires businesses to hire workers to process the cans in stores and in redemption and recycle centers at regular wages.

frame 18c

WRITE THE CONCLUSION

Start with a restatement of the point of view introduced in the first paragraph.

Emphasize point that you consider important.

Conclude with an important point.

It would be a travesty for the legislature to rescind the law that requires manufacturers to collect a deposit on beverage cans and bottles sold in Massachusetts. The law encourages people to be less wasteful and more enterprising. It results in a clean state that we can all enjoy.

frame 206

READ THE TOPIC

Modern technology has resulted in changes in the way people occupy themselves during their leisure time. An example of this is the prevalence of video games in our society. Do you think that video games are good or bad for us? In an essay, write your point of view and defend it with specific examples.

frame 4b

UNDERSTAND THE TOPIC

Find important words

Modern technology has resulted in changes in the way people **occupy themselves** during their leisure time. An example of this is the prevalence of video games in our society. Do you think that **video games** are **good or bad** for us? In an essay, write your point of view and defend it with specific examples.

frame 5b

WRITE YOUR POINT OF VIEW IN ONE SENTENCE.

Playing video games in moderation can be good, but playing in excess can be bad.

frame 6b

BRAINSTORM TO GENERATE IDEAS

video games		headache		health problems	
fun		skip homework		killing	
skill		quit job		boring	
hand and eye		solitary		mathematics	
education		expensive		build cities	
violence		couch potato		fantasy	
addictive		no exercise		imagination	
time consuming		geography		logic	
radiation		history			

frame 7b

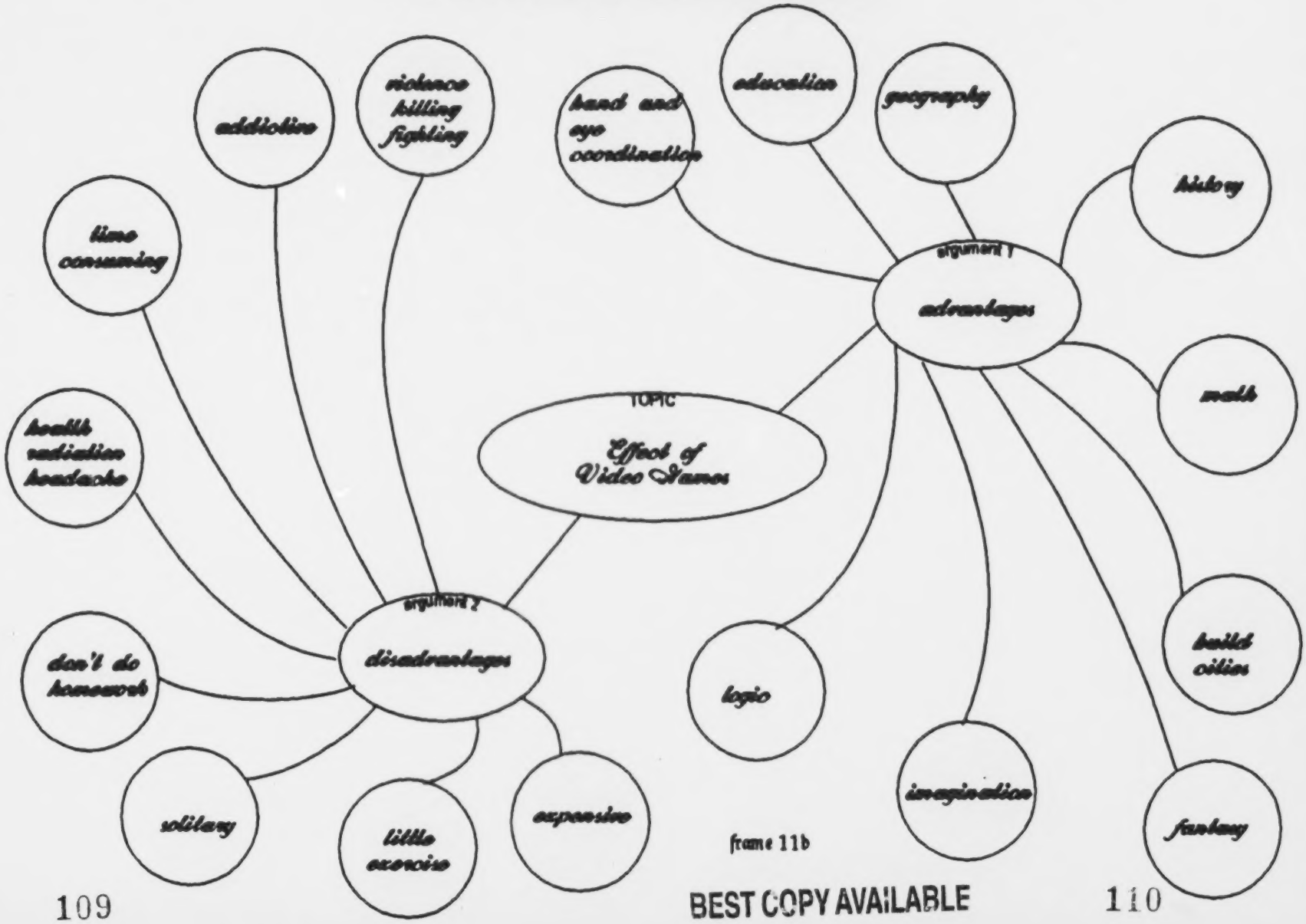
Classify the Brainstorming Ideas

The brainstorming list has been divided into two groups: (1) Learning (2) Disadvantages

video games		headache	2	health problems	2
fun	1	skip homework	2	killing	2
skill	1	quit job	2	boring	2
hand and eye	1	solitary	2	mathematics	1
education	1	expensive	2	build cities	1
violence	2	couch potato	2	fantasy	1
addictive	2	no exercise	2	imagination	1
time consuming	2	geography	1	logic	1
radiation	2	history	1		

frame 8b

CLUSTER DIAGRAM



frame 11b

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

WRITE THE INTRODUCTION

Start with your point of view or purpose.

Introduce the first argument
Video games can have a positive affect.

Introduce the second argument
Video games can have a negative effect.

The prevalence of video games in our society is a concern of many parents and educators in this country. Although many believe that video games can have a positive effect on human development, there is no doubt that there are many negative side effects. Since this new craze is in its infancy, it is still too early to tell what its long term effects will be.

frame 15b

WRITE THE FIRST BODY PARAGRAPH

Topic expressed in first sentences. Positive effects of video games. Specific examples that support the topic sentence follow.

There are many positive effects of video games that we can observe right now. Since people have fun playing video games, they play a lot. This seems to help people improve their eye and hand coordination. With many games, players can increase their factual knowledge of geography, history, and other subjects. Playing math games can increase a person's skills in solving mathematics problems. Some programs can even help develop reasoning and logic. For example there is a program that lets a player develop a knowledge of the relationship between people, land, and capital resources by simulating the development of a city. The player takes the role of a city manager. The viability of the city depends on the decisions the player makes. Fantasy games stimulate imagination.

frame 17b

WRITE THE SECOND BODY PARAGRAPH

Start with a topic sentence. This paragraph supports the second argument Negative effects of playing video games.
Specific examples that support the topic sentence follow.

There is, however, a very serious negative side to the popularity of video games. They tend to be addictive. Both children and adults spend an inordinate amount of time in front of the video monitor at the expense of other activities. They don't do their homework or play outside with their friends. It is unhealthy to spend hours staring at a video screen. Many programs expose the players to violent situations, involving fighting, killing, torture, and so on. Most of these violent programs don't appear to have any redeeming social value. One fact we should not overlook is that the games tend to be very expensive.

frame 18b

WRITE THE CONCLUSION

Start with a restatement of the point of view introduced in the first paragraph.

Concludes with a statement of what we should do with video games. i.e., use judiciously and with moderation.

We can conclude that a reasonable use of the new video game technology can be beneficial to both the individual and society. As with all things, however, it behooves us to use this technology judiciously and with moderation.

frame 20b

READ THE TOPIC

When we walk through the streets of Worcester or Boston, men and women often approach us asking for some change. Do you believe that we have a moral obligation to help people who ask for money, or do you believe that these people should be working rather than begging in the streets? State your opinion and support it with specific examples.

frame 4c

UNDERSTAND THE TOPIC

Find important words

When we walk through the streets of Worcester or Boston, men and women often approach us **asking for some change**. Do you believe that we have a **moral obligation** to help people who ask for money, or do you believe that these people should be **working** rather than **begging** in the streets? State your opinion and support it with specific examples.

frame 5e

WRITE YOUR POINT OF VIEW IN ONE SENTENCE.

If a person on the street asks us for money, we should give him some, because he or she may be in great need.

frame 6e

BRAINSTORM TO GENERATE IDEAS

money		law		homeless	
poor		welfare		charity	
help		not take chance		small amount	
need		steal ..		for its own sake	
emergency		police		unemployment	
kids		good feeling		spiritual feeling	
wife/ husband		hungry		food	

frame 7e

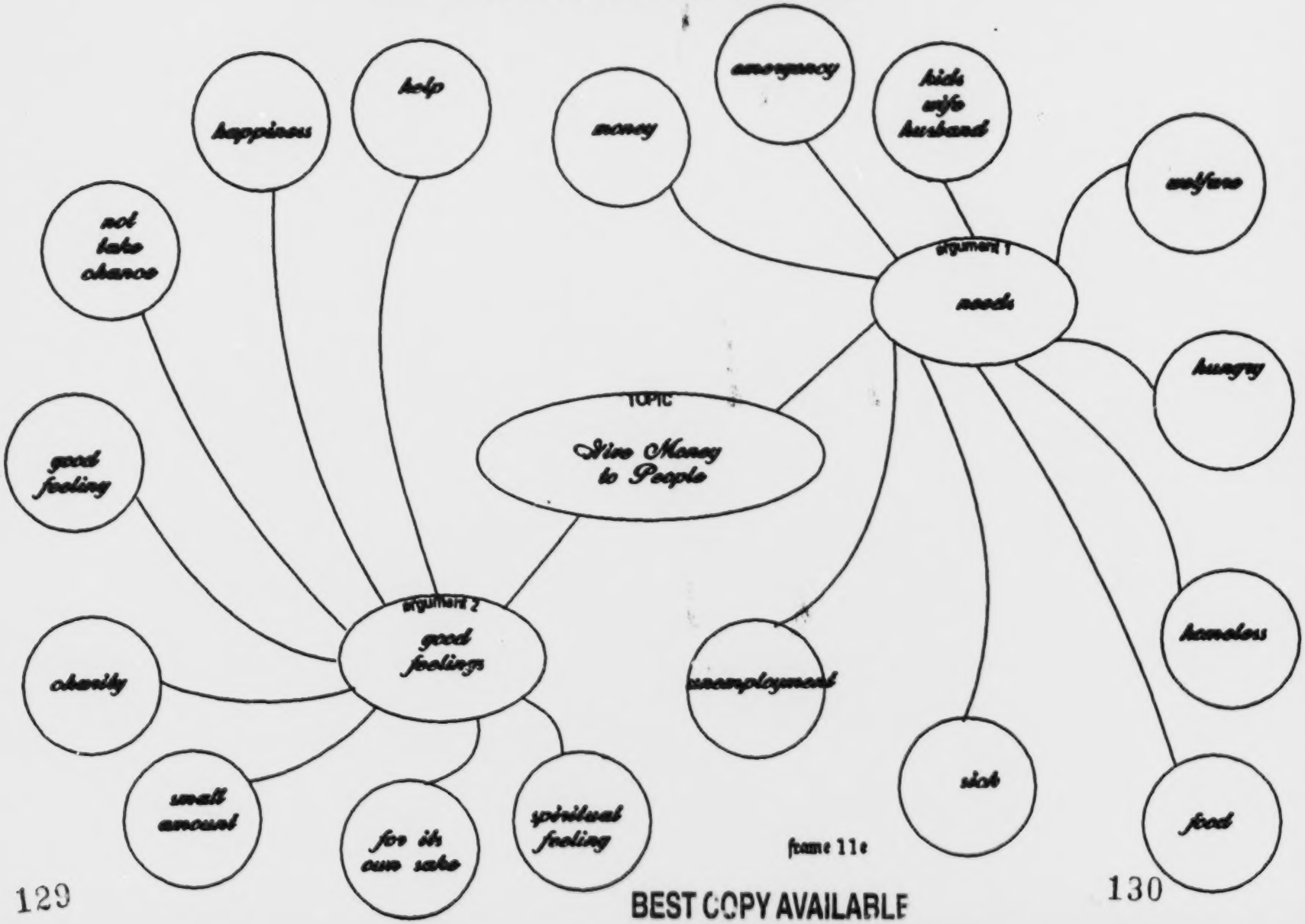
Classify the Brainstorming Ideas

The brainstorming list has been divided into two groups: (1) Need (2) Good feeling

money	1	law		homeless	1
poor	1	welfare	1	charity	2
help	2	not take chance		small amount	2
need	1	steal		for its own sake	2
emergency	1	police		unemployment	1
kids	1	good feeling	2	spiritual feeling	2
wife/husband	1	hungry	1	food	1

frame 8e

CLUSTER DIAGRAM



frame 11e

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

WRITE THE INTRODUCTION

In this essay the point of view can be found in third sentence.

The first supporting idea is that there are people in need. The second supporting idea is that an act of charity lifts our spirits.

While walking through our large cities, we can hardly avoid being stopped by poor people asking us for the price of a cup of coffee. Many of us look at these people with distaste, as the dregs of the world, not worth our attention. I believe that we have a moral obligation not only not to avoid people in need, but to help them. Performing an act of charity not only helps the recipient, but lifts the spirit of the giver.

frame 15e

WRITE THE FIRST BODY PARAGRAPH

Topic expressed in first sentence: Needs of poor people.

Specific reasons why people are in need.

Transition to next paragraph.

Although some beggars may be unworthy people, how can we know for sure about the needs of a particular individual. We do know, however, that we live in very difficult economic times. There is much unemployment. There is a housing shortage. A person who asks us for help may be literally starving. A little change may be all a poor person is going to live on for the day.

frame 17e

WRITE THE SECOND BODY PARAGRAPH

Topic sentence refers to second argument. Charity helps the giver.

The following sentences offer two reasons in support.

We give charity not only to help a poor person, but also to help ourselves. In the Judeo-Christian tradition, it is a righteous deed to give a person aid. Doing a righteous deed without any thought of compensation or praise makes a person feel good about himself.

fcsmc 18e

WRITE THE CONCLUSION

Restatement of point of view included in this paragraph.

Concludes with hope for the future.

If people had more consideration for those who need help, people would learn how to get along with each other. Small personal acts of charity will make this world a better place in which to live.

frame 20e

WRITING for the GED

HOW TO ORGANIZE YOUR TIME

Guideline for making good use of your time.

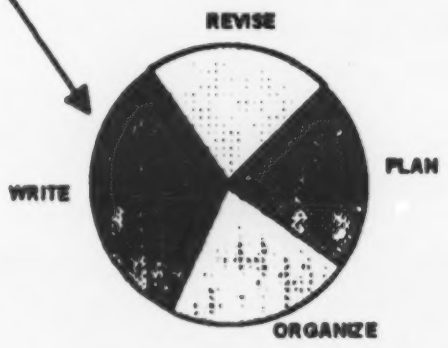
Take 10 minutes to **plan** your essay.

Take 10 minutes to **organize** your essay.

Take 15 minutes to **write** your essay.

Take 10 minutes to **revise** your essay.

Do not spend more than one third of the allowed time writing the essay.



PLAN

READ THE TOPIC

In all our lives there is a certain person who played a very important role in helping us understand something that will always be important to us. Describe a person in your life who played an important role in shaping your own view of the world and the people around you. This person may be someone in your family who helped raise you or perhaps someone who came to know you on your own. Explain the important role this person played in your life and how your life may have been changed by this person.

Make sure you understand all the key points of the topic.

Marking all the important or key words in the topic helps.

In all our lives there is a certain **person** who played a very **important role** in helping us understand something that will always be important to us. **Describe** a person in your life who played an important role in shaping your own view of the world and the people around you. This person may be someone in your **family** who helped raise you or perhaps someone who came to know you on your own. Explain the important role this person played in your life and how your life may have been **changed** by this person.

DECIDE ON YOUR POINT OF VIEW.
STATE IT IN ONE COMPLETE SENTENCE.

The person who played an important role in shaping my life was Uncle Ned.

GENERATE IDEAS BY BRAINSTORMING

Uncle		*knows a lot*		*lecturer*	
successful		*had interesting jobs*		*happy*	
reads		*had freedom*		*caring*	
red convertible		*money*		*good to people*	
personality		*teacher*		*paid attention to me*	
friends		*pet-store owner*			
traveled		*travel agent*			
girlfriends		*truck driver*			
retired young		*fine clothes*			

ORGANIZE

DIVIDE THE BRAINSTORMING IDEAS INTO GROUPS.

The example essay has been divided into three groups: (1) jobs, (2) personality, (3) knows a lot.

Uncle	2	*knows a lot*	3	*lecturer*	1
successful	2	*had interesting jobs*	1	*happy*	2
reads	3	*had freedom*	1	*caring*	2
red convertible	2	*money*	2	*good to people*	2
personality	2	*teacher*	1	*paid attention to me*	2
friends	2	*pet-store owner*	1		
traveled	3	*travel agent*	1		
girlfriends	2	*truck driver*	1		
retired young	1	*fine clothes*	2		

ORGANIZE IDEAS

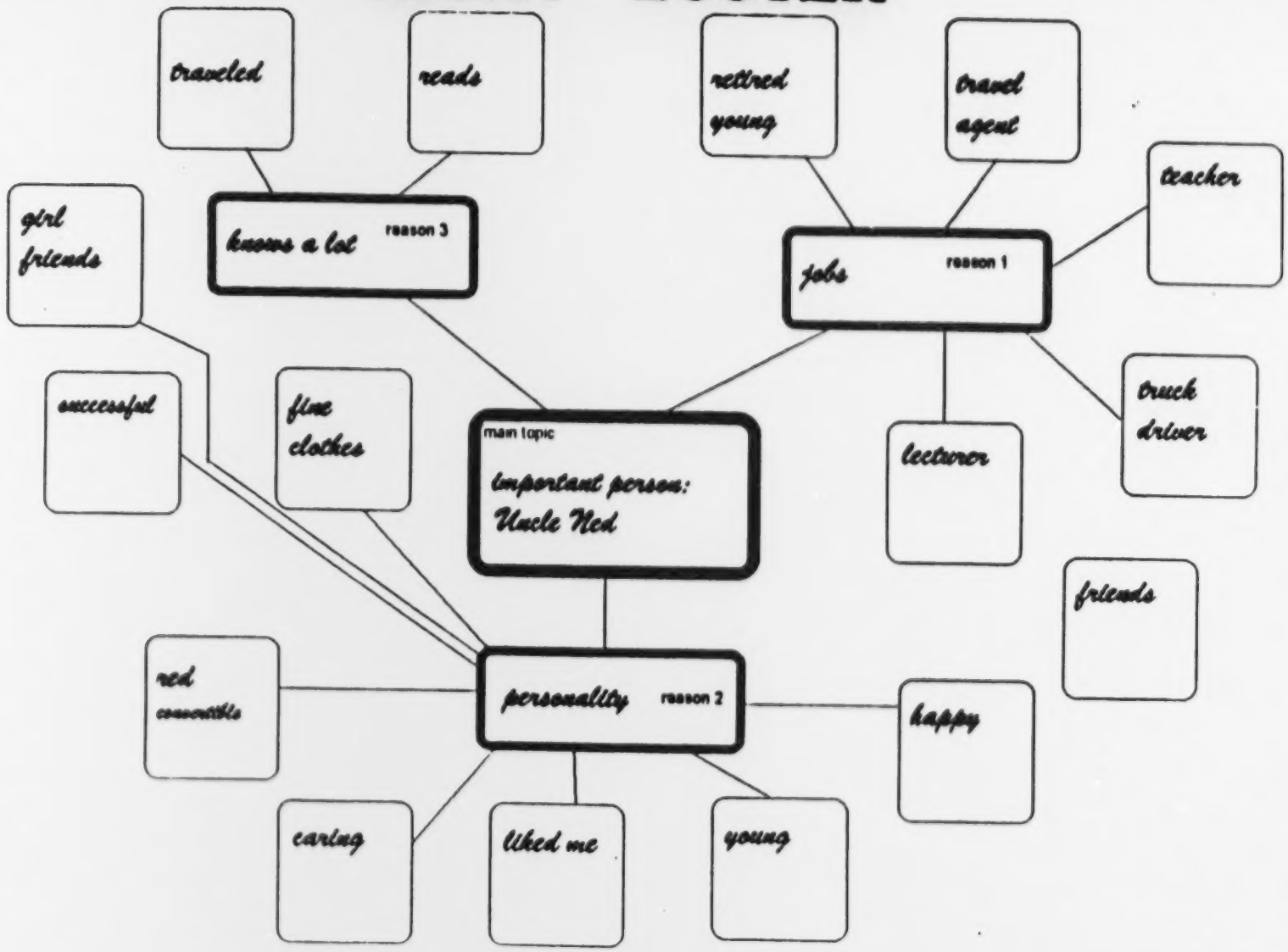
- Take results of brainstorming.
- Eliminate words that have similar meanings.
- Arrange words in categories groups.
- Name each group.

JOBS	PERSONALITY	KNOWS A LOT
had interesting jobs	successful	reads
teacher	red convertible	traveled
pet store owner	personality	knows a lot
travel agent	friends	
truck driver	girlfriends	
lecturer	fine clothes	
retired young	happy	
	caring	
	good to people	
	paid attention to me	

DRAW A CLUSTER DIAGRAM

- Write main topic in center box.
- Write the group names in large boxes connected to center box.
- Write supporting ideas in boxes connected to group names.

ESSAY ' LUSTER



WRITE

ESSAYS ARE DIVIDED INTO THREE PARTS.

- INTRODUCTION
- BODY
- CONCLUSION

INTRODUCTION

The first paragraph is the introduction.

- Clearly state the point of view about the topic in the first paragraph. It is usually best to state the point of view in the first sentence or two.
- Introduce the reasons for the point of view in the first paragraph. This usually consists of a few sentences after the point of view. The reasons can be found in the large boxes in the cluster diagram connected to the topic box. Briefly mention the reasons. Do not go into detail.
- Arouse the interest of the reader. Sometimes this can be done in the form of a question or add some background information that may interest the reader.

WARNING: Do not assume that the reader has read the topic question. State your point of view fully and clearly.

WRITING THE INTRODUCTION

Central point of view is stated immediately. Uncle Ned was an important person.

First reason for point of View: jobs.

Second reason for point of view: friends.

Third reason for point of view: educated.

One of the people who was most important in my life was my Uncle Ned. He was important because he was different from my immediate family. He had many different jobs, many different friends, and was well educated. I always thought his life was much more interesting than the rest of my family's. I wanted to be like him. I wanted to have a lot of jobs and friends and be educated from my experience and travels.

BODY

The body consists of two or three paragraphs which develop the supporting ideas that were introduced in the first paragraph.

- There should be a paragraph developed for each of the supporting ideas found in the large blocks of the cluster diagram. The ideas should be written in the topic sentence.
- Supporting examples to help explain these ideas are found in the small squares attached to the supporting ideas. These examples should be used to develop each paragraph.

WRITE THE FIRST BODY PARAGRAPH

Topic sentence. *My Uncle had more jobs than anyone I ever knew. He owned a pet store until he sold the store and decided to travel. When he returned from his travels, he became a travel agent. Then he was a truck driver for a while. After that, he taught in a private school, and he lectured for a while for a book club in town.*

Gives examples in support of first reason for point of view: pet store owner, travel agent, etc.

concluding sentence of paragraph *All these different jobs made my uncle an interesting and fascinating person to know.*

WRITE THE SECOND BODY PARAGRAPH

Topic sentence.

Gives examples in support of second reason for point of view.

My uncle was good to everybody, but he was especially good to me. He had a red convertible in those days. It was just like him: not flashy, just nice looking and comfortable. He took me everywhere in it — the movies, bowling, even a horse race. I loved that convertible.

WRITE THE THIRD BODY PARAGRAPH

Gives example in support of the third reason for the point of view:
smart.
He traveled and read a lot.

Uncle Ned was educated through his world travels and all his reading. He was always reading and once told me that he never met a person in real life that he hadn't already met in a book he had read. He said that gave him an advantage when he met people.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion is the final paragraph. Include some of the following items in the concluding paragraph. Remember that the final paragraph should pull everything together.

- Restate the main idea in different words. This can be risky, however, because it may sound redundant or boring.
- Give some final advice.
- State your opinions.
- A sentence that emphasizes the importance of the topic.
- How the issue relates to your life or to the readers' lives.
- Propose a solution to the problem.
- Write anything else you can think of to make your essay strong.

DO NOT introduce new topics.

WRITE THE CONCLUSION

Restated point of view and concludes.

He had lots of jobs, lots of friends, and was very intelligent. I wanted to be like that too. I think each of these things symbolized something to me when I was small. All the jobs meant freedom and the friends meant never being lonely. Being smart meant always being able to take care of yourself. My uncle meant the good life to me. Though I am different from my uncle today. I too have tried to keep my freedom, have lots of friends, and become educated in my own way. I never got a red convertible though, mine is a green one.

How subject related to writer.

REVISE

V. Revise Essay

A. Key ideas.

Did you state the central idea of your essay in one sentence?
Is the central idea or point of view stated clearly enough that any reader would be able to restate it?

B. Content

Did you use specific examples that support your point of view?
Are your examples explained clearly enough that your reader can see how they support your point of view?
Did you consider the opinions of a person who might not agree with your point of view? If so, did you answer that argument?

C. Organization

Did you state your point of view right away?
Did you present two or three important supporting ideas
Would your reader be able to restate what the important supporting ideas are?
Did you use words that show how your supporting ideas relate to the central idea and to each other.

D. Summary or Conclusion

Does your summary or conclusion restate your point of view and supporting ideas so that the reader is reminded of them?
Does your summary or conclusion follow logically from what you said in your essay?

The essay that follows is based on the sample map in Lesson 4. To the left of the essay are comments that indicate how it follows the map. Following the essay is an explanation of how the essay was written according to the steps outlined in the chart on writing essays.

As you read this essay, you may notice some errors in usage, sentence structure, and mechanics. Remember that this is only a first draft and the writer is concentrating on getting the ideas on paper in an organized manner. In lessons 6 and 7, this essay will be revised and edited.

SAMPLE ESSAY

Central point of view is stated

"Uncle Ned was important person."

First reason for point of view: "jobs"
Second reason for point of view: "friends"
Third reason for point of view: "smart"

One of the people who was most important in shaping my life was my Uncle Ned. He was important because he was different from my immediate family. He had many different kinds of jobs and he have many different kinds of friends and he also was very smart. I always thought his life was much more interesting than the rest of my families. I wanted to be like him to have a lot of jobs and friends and be educated from my experiences and travels and other things.

Gives examples in support of first reason for point of view: "pet store owner, travel agent, truck driver, teacher, lecturer"

My Uncle had more jobs than anyone I ever knew. My father used to say that he had so many jobs because he couldn't keep a job, but I think that he just got bored with things after a while. He owned a pet store until he sold the store and decided to travel. When he came back after a few years he became a travel agent. Then he he was a truck driver for a while. After that, he taught in a private school, and he lectured for a while for a book club in town.

Gives examples in support of second reason for point of view: "good to people, good to me, lots of friends, girlfriends, red convertible"

He was good to people and he was especially good to me. He had lots of friends and he had lots of girlfriends who used to come around the house. He had a red convertible in those days and I always wanted to have a red convertible too.

Everyone thought that he was very smart. I guess he got smart from all of his travels all over the world and all over the United States too. And he read a lot of books and other kinds of things

Gives examples in support of third reason for point of view: "traveled, read a lot"

like magazines. Uncle Ned was always reading one book or another. He told me that every time he read a book he learned something he didn't know before. He once told me that because of all the characters he met in the novels he read that he never met a person in real life that he hadn't already met in a book he had read. He said that gave you an advantage when you met people.

He had lots of jobs, lots of friends and was very smart. I always wanted to be like that too. I think each of the things he had meant something to me when I was small. All the jobs meant freedom and the friends meant never being lonely. Being smart meant always being able to take care of yourself. I guess that my uncle meant the good life to me. Though I am different from my uncle, I too have tried to keep my freedom, have lots of friends, and become educated in my own way. I never got a red convertible though; it's a green one.

Restates point of view and concludes

Discussion

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VI. Edit Essay

A. Read your essay in a whisper.

B. Read at the speed-normal or slow- that works best for you.

C. Read through the paragraph underlining errors that you can find.

D. Correct the errors.

E. Read your essay backward concentrating on spelling mistakes.

F. Read once more.

The revised essay from Lesson 6 (pages 163–166) was edited using suggestions from the Editing Chart. Portions of the revised essay are shown below with editorial changes. Notice how these changes help polish the essay.

PARAGRAPH 1

was well educated.
He had many different jobs, many different friends, and ~~he was very smart.~~
I always thought his life was much more interesting than the rest of my
y's
families.

PARAGRAPH 2

returned from his travels
My Uncle had more jobs than anyone I ever knew. . . . When he came
~~back after a few years~~ he became a travel agent.

PARAGRAPH 3

My uncle
~~He~~ was good to everybody, but he was especially good to me.

PARAGRAPH 4

Uncle Ned was educated through travels all
~~I guess from~~ his ~~travels all over the~~ world and his reading ~~he became an~~
~~educated man.~~ He was always reading and once told me that he never met
hadn't met in
a person in real life that he ~~didn't~~ already ~~know from~~ a book he had read.
him he
He said that gave you an advantage when you met people.

PARAGRAPH 5

intelligent
He had lots of jobs, lots of friends and was very ~~smart.~~ . . . I never got a
mine is
red convertible though ~~it's~~ a green one.

...e was important because he was different from my immediate family. He had many different jobs, many ...ferent friends, and was well educated. I always thought his life was much more interesting than the rest of my family's. I wanted to be like him. I wanted to have a lot of jobs and friends and be educated from my experiences and travels.

My uncle had more jobs than anyone I ever knew. He owned a pet store until he sold the store and decided to travel. When he returned from his travels, he became a travel agent. Then he was a truck driver for a while. After that, he taught in a private school, and he lectured for a while for a book club in town. All these different jobs made my uncle an interesting and fascinating person to know.

My uncle was good to everybody, but he was especially good to me. He had a red convertible in those days. It was just like him: not flashy, just nice looking and comfortable. He took me everywhere in it—the movies, bowling, even a horse race. I loved that convertible.

Uncle Ned was educated through his world travels and all his reading. He was always reading and once told me that he never met a person in real life that he hadn't already met in a book he had read. He said that gave him an advantage when he met people.

He had lots of jobs, lots of friends, and was very intelligent. I wanted to be like that too. I think each of these things symbolized something to me when I was small. All the jobs meant freedom and the friends meant never being lonely. Being smart meant always being able to take care of yourself. My uncle meant the good life to me. Though I am different from my uncle today, I too have tried to keep my freedom, have lots of friends, and become educated in my own way. I never got a red convertible though: mine is a green one.